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1909

In Love's Garden
and Other Verses

Ida Frances Anderson



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IN LOVE'S GARDEN
AND OTHER VERSES

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AUTOGRAPHED EDITION

In Love's Garden
And Other Verses

Ida Frances Anderson



ARROYO GUILD PRESS
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

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Pasadena, California

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INTRODUCTION

By George Wharton James

INTRODUCTION



OR many years I have believed and taught that California was destined to become the radiating center of the artistic, literary and inspirational powers of the world. I have contended that the freedom of the West was one of the essential conditions for the highest and best development. The soul of man must have absolutely free course to express itself, regardless of rules, conventions and restrictions. The soul only is of God—godlike;—rules, restrictions, conventions, are inventions of man, and while they often appear good, they also often do much harm.

In this age of conventionality and fear to do anything different from the accepted standard, it is a delight and a gratification to me to meet with work that shows power and freedom, and a complete ignoring of all conventional rules. In her verses Miss Anderson has cared for neither rhyme nor rythm. She has

had something to say, however, that was worth the saying, and that is well worth the world's hearing. But the reader who expects to find ordinary poems, set to the music of jingling rhymes, will lay the book down, disappointed. In form these verses are purely individualistic, —more so even than Walt Whitman's. Yet there is a spontaneity to them, and a rythmic quality that recalls the improvisations of the old Saxon skalds, or the singers of the Sagas, a primitive power of utterance that is both tuneful and dignified. Anything in our complex civilization that denotes a return to the simple, the primitive, the genuine, the unaffected;—anything that is absolutely free from the taint of the conventional, is especially welcome to me, because of what I believe to be its leavening influence in the world. We are all the while saying what the world expects us to say, in the words the world has chosen we shall say our thoughts in, run into certain set moulds. Here comes a young woman, who, without blare of trumpets, or



shriek of defiance, calmly, quietly, and serenely, because thoroughly conscious of her God-given right, says exactly what she feels in exactly her own way. Not one word too many or one too few, in order to conform to the rules of rhyme and meter. Indeed, as one has already said of her verse: "It is as if a woman of mature years, with exalted conceptions of life, her youthful ideals retained in all their sweet, full freshness, has expressed her inmost thoughts with remarkable clarity and precision, yet with the quiet, powerful and fearless language of a precocious child."

I have prevailed upon Miss Anderson to allow me to use as her introduction a few verses, entitled "The Heart," which she brought to me as her own spontaneous explanation of the "why" of the apparent formlessness of her verse, and her refusal to obey the conventions of prosody. It is worthy a careful perusal and long consideration.

Anyhow, for what they are these pages are now given to the public. Their author has

already expressed in "Man's God-like Gift," her calm acquiescence and acceptance of "the worst man may do." So with both pleasure and fearlessness I now commend them to all who value a free, spontaneous, natural expression of the inner feelings and thoughts of a singularly pure, clear, transparent soul.

GEORGE WHARTON JAMES.

Pasadena, October 1, 1909.

THE HEART AND ITS MESSAGE

THE HEART



OW can we measure the heart,
By line or rhyme?
Its rythmic beats not set to time
Of man's device;
Now fast, now slow, they move;
Now stop for pause:
E'en as the rythm of the wave
That pulses free, unmeasured,
Careless now to lose a beat,
Careless now to measure full,
But following true its own great law.
O heart, shouldst thou be less?
Hast thou no great law of thine own?
Must the exact mind
Measure thy beats by foot and line
And cast thee in a mould of rhyme,—
Thou, untamed and free?
Not so! Yet many are the man-made rules,
To twist thee out of shape,
So that we know thee not.
When thou art done thy voice,
Rule would add another sound

AND ITS MESSAGE

To fill the place prescribed.
When thou wouldst pour another note
To ease thy burdened self,
"Stop!" she cries,
"It is enough, the line is full!"
And when thou wouldst cry this,
"Cry that," she says,
"To make these sounds the same
There must be two or more
All dressed alike."
O heart, full heart,
How canst express thyself,—
Thou loved offspring of the muse,
Forever wild and free,
That no man holds
To tame and harness thee,
But thou escapst, heaven-helped,
And leavst thy shadow in the place?
Glad am I thou of heaven art,
And rules prescribed by man,
If thou must brook,
Thyself thou drawest hence,
And leavst dead words in thine untenanted
home.

IN LOVES GARDEN AND OTHER VERSES

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

LOVE'S GARDEN



IN this garden Love's fair
flowers
Bloom apace,
As they spring forth from
the heart,
Their root and chief
resource.
Fadeless flowers,
Born of hours
In Love's life.
Walk you in this garden,
Your own garden.
Live these hours,
See these flowers
Face to face;
Your own hours,
Your own flowers.

LOVE'S CONQUEST

Love came soft
When sleep was on,
And stole a look,
And left a kiss
On his closed eyelids.
Then softly did she leave,
As softly as she came.
The kiss did sink into those orbs of blue,
And wrought a vision there.
Again Love came,
And stole a look,
And left a kiss
On his dew'd lips.
And this was wrought into a song.
Yet once again came Love,
And pressed her lips upon his heart.
And there was wrought upon that heart
Her goddess face,
All full of tenderness and grace.
And thus did love by stealth
Woo and win him for herself.



LOVE'S SPIRIT-IMAGE

Round about me lurks his spirit,
Playing hide and seek
'Mongst the rifts of thought.
Now I pause, and there his image.
Back to work,—
It sinks in darkness.
There again! the very moment
I lose hold the threads of tension,
Hovering round in wondrous nearness,
Pressing, drawing, and caressing.
Yet, O darling lover mine,
When I reach my hands to hold thee
Close unto my heart,
Nothingness I clasp unto me!
Pained and shamed and all pride-riven,
Foolish I, to let my eager senses
Think to press thee, Spirit-lover,
Close against this red-blood heart
That may never, never fold thee.



LOVE'S PRIDE

Will you go? Then go!
I hold you not.
Can you spare no love?
'Tis well.
I would have it not!
But my heart, my heart shall weep.
What my lips deign not to ask,
O proud spirit!



LOVE'S MESSAGE

Would I send the impress of Love
To lips I ne'er have touched?
Would I fold in close embrace
The heart that might recoil?
Ah, yes—and more!
For Love cannot withhold its love.
It can but cast it forth,
Though fruitless still it fall.
But do the lips refuse?
And does the heart recoil?
Ah, no, not so, in this sweet dream,
Not dreamed in sleep,
But fancy-woven in the heart.

LOVE'S KISS

The first kiss—when and where?
All blessing on that time,
When heaven shall descend
And take the hour,
To have its will, to have its way.
No eye may look,—but angel-eyes!
No form draw near,—but angel-forms!
To bless that sacred hour,
When soul meets soul
At the gateway of the lips.



LOVE'S DREAM

And now, sweet sleep
That wrests our troubles from us
For so brief time,
Fold me in thine arms.
If not for all—sweet cruel sleep,
Then for a space.
The dawn! how it gilds the hills,
How it floods the sky,
How it makes new a world—
Young and fresh and beautiful,
From the sable night and the land of dreams.
Love—tender child of Dawn,
Roseate, fair and sweet,—
That makes new a life
From a faded day.
I wake, and O the joy!
Come I not forth
Fresh from the touch of his circling arms,
Radiant with light from his tender eyes,
And drawn by that smile
As the tide by the moon is drawn?

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

This all in dream—in the dawn's first glow,
At the birds' first note.
Sweet dream! faint shadow of the real.
But, ah, the real—how can I know,
If yet the real
Be sweeter than the dream?

LOVE'S TREMBLING JOY

O thou day-star, thou night-star,
Thou blessed lamp of life!
O if I should lose thee—
God cleave the dark
And reach a hand!



LOVE'S DAY

That sweet, sweet day;—
Let it live again in mind.
Here lie I, where he lay,
Pressing this friendly grass,
And gazing on that sky.
Methinks this cold earth pulsates
With a warmth of him,
Whose form is now replaced by mine.
I mingle in his being thus,
And drink the sweets he drank,
Of air and sky and sound,
On that delightful morn.
Now so changed,
But yet the same.



LOVE'S FLOWERS

His spirit hovers round me;—
A circling zone of light:
I breathe his being,
And our souls spring each to each.
These fair new blossoms I put forth
Are not mine—all;
But mine and his—sweet flowers,
Born of our souls in Love's pure garden.



LOVE UNGATHERED

The last rose on the tree
Has shed its petals at my feet.
The autumn winds have blown a blast,
And summer's gone.
How many a one has plucked his rose,
And worn it on his heart:
While mine was left to bloom and die,
Its sweets ungathered.
Now Death shall be my rose,
And yield me perfume sweet.
I'll have no fear I'll miss my flower,
For Death blooms in the winter.



LOVE'S ASHES

Heap high the pile!
Make bright the flame!
What youth's rose colors
In that flame!
What tears, what sighs,
What old time merriment!
What memories tender,
Clothed in youthful prattle,—
Youthful ravings,
Rainbow colored, in that flame—
Incense spreading in that flame—
Cold and gray in that blue smoke.
But from the heap
Snatch now that sheet.
O haste! for there is yet another,
Perishing with the rest.
These would I keep,
For they are sweet to me;
Not sweet for love that was,
But sweet for pain that was.
What pitiful longings unfulfilled,
What clinging, tender hopes,

Which I, the strong,
The now matured,
The tempered in the fire,
Hold out before me
To witness fade and die
Yet once again.
These are their courses,
Fair, ah fair!
Lay them tenderly away, my heart,
Deep in thy bosom!
These fair, fair courses
Of a youthful love.

LOVE'S REFUSAL

You think me chary of my kisses!
I cannot tell you how
My kiss is born of love!
To press your lips in fond embrace
Is Heaven's eternal seal!
To you, 'tis but a pretty fancy—
A fleeting golden moment,
You care not to remember.
Or if, perchance, you do remember,
'Tis but a passing thought of pleasure.
Such knowledge chills
The tendrils that would cling,
And makes me hold from you
E'en that I fain would give!



LOVE'S WAITING

To wait! to wait!
What fate! what fate!
How drag the hours;
How sink the powers:
A god might sigh,
Why chide my cry?
To wait, to wait,
What fate, what fate!
The sweet hopes die
As days go by;
The eyes in tears,
The heart in fears;
To wait, to wait,
What fate, what fate!
Then haste, haste on,
Thou look'd for one!
Desire of soul and heart,
So long we part.
Why wait, why wait?
Sad fate, sad fate
For me, for thee

All time to be!
And so I wait,
Though late, though late;
And how I pray
For thee this day!

LOVE'S COST

Why ever looked I on that face,
Whose pure, sweet soul,
Seen from those eyes,
Heard from those lips,
And felt through that majestic presence,
Shall haunt me evermore?
What god or demon willed it so:
To give love birth,
Then slip pain in its stead,
And add immortal life?
Ah! pain unending:
For one look on love
How dear a cost!



LOVE'S PRANKS

List! Hark! Stop the work!
Love is at the door,
Low and light the tap.
If I ope the door,
Will he enter now,
Or but look and listen as before,
With one foot upon the threshold;
Till the heart, all o'erwrought,
Leaves her work unfinished,
Gathering dust,
While she stands forlorn,
Sighing, hoping, and entreating Love
To enter and possess?
But Love does not enter;
But Love will not enter.
To thy work, O heart deceived—
O heart enchanted.
Love's but stealing of thy sweets,
As the thieving bee
Pausing on the flower:
He to other flowers will go

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

Soon enough, soon enough!
'Tis the honey that he wants,
Not the flower!
But, O troubled watcher,
Close not tight thy door;
Yield some sweets to Love,
While he lingers, while he stays.
If he will not enter,
If he will not earnest be,—
Come to dwell with thee,
Treat him as he treats;
But yield not thy heart!
That too sacred, too divine
For Love's pastime!
Keep that for a worthy hour.



LOVE'S DISCOVERY

I found the home of my beloved,
All hid in vines and flowers,
All quiet in the moonlight.
'Twas e'en a temple, where my heart
Bowed from afar in love and longing—
A temple where my feet might never enter.
O pain delicious!
To worship at Love's shrine,
But ne'er that love possess.
O heaven found: O heaven lost!
O joy of joys!
O pain of pains!

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

LOVE'S DAWN

'Twas in Love's dawn—the tender waking,—
Love, all rose-colored, stole upon me,
And stood, a smiling goddess, there.
I kissed her garment's hem.
Each thing she touched,
Each thing she looked upon,
Was wrought into an altar,
Where my heart was wont to worship.
All the world was then a temple
For Love's sake!
A sweet fane to linger in
At night, at morn,
And in each vagrant hour,
Caught napping by the way.
And then one only song I sang,
As Time sweet wings did take:

SONG

All the world's a gala day,
And the heart is out a-Maying;
Sweet, sweet hours,
Gathering flowers
For to lay at fair Love's feet.



When was ever life so rich,
When was ever earth so sweet,
As these hours
Gathering flowers
For to lay at fair Love's feet?

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

LOVE'S DESPAIR

I kiss you again, again, sweet,
In dreams, in waking dreams,
Be you alive, or be you dead,
You know it not, sweet!
Your soul is not of my soul,
And hence no bridge can ever span
The gulf that lies betwixt us,
Whereon your soul might cross to mine,
And feel that kiss, and know that love
That burns for naught, for naught, sweet!

LOVE'S HOPE

We dwell in different worlds, sweet:
You cannot come to me,
But when your soul is born
Into the place I am,
Then joy of joys, and light of light,
You will be mine;
And all the worlds will then rejoice
At joy so great!



LOVE'S UNHEEDED LANGUAGE

"I love you, I love you!"
The heart o'er running speaks:
"I love you, I love you!"
The tell-tale eyes and cheeks repeat.
"I love you, I love you!"
The willing hands, and ready feet,
And thoughtful mind in chorus join.
"You see it not? You feel it not?"
O blessed dullard you!

LOVE'S PHANTOM SORROW

Dost think I did not love thee?
O that these tears might turn to flowers,
These sighs breathe forth the breath of spring,
And I might sink in this great sorrow,
As on a bed of roses
Suffused with sweetness,
Though beset with thorns!

LOVE'S JOY

"He loves me, he loves me!"
The joyous heart outbursts.
"He loves me, he loves me!"
A thousand voices echo back
From sky and sea,
From wood and field;
"He loves me, he loves me!"
From bird and brook,
From home and street;
"He loves me, he loves me!"
Until no sound that heart can hear
From any voice in earth or sky,
But—"He loves me, he loves me!"



LOVE'S EXPECTATION

He is coming to me, my own!
Night breaketh day by this much nearer:
Day breaketh night by that much nearer:
O so near!
I almost feel the clasp of his hand,
I almost breathe the breath of his breath,
As my thoughts rush out to meet him.
O queen that I am,
Though I see no crown,
My throne here already
And he beside me!

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

LOVE'S EYES

Two eyes I see in the mists of life;
Two eyes I feel—two blue, blue eyes;
Two eyes that ruleth me—
Compel my thoughts to fly to thee,
O heart of mine, far, far estranged!
I know not when, I know not how.
Thy fortunes, too, I know not of,
Nor where thou art,—
All hid from me, all veiled in dark:
But eyes of blue, thou eyes of blue,
From out this dark
Thou lookest straight at me,
And movest my doubting heart
To thoughts of my lost love,
Lest I forget, unconscious to myself.
O eyes of blue, be ever such a light,
To light me to thee, heart of mine!
That my whole life
May flow to thee,
In thought born of this light,
And draw thee back to me.



LOVE'S REMEMBRANCE

For thee I shall plant a rose!
And wear it in my hair,
Or breathe its fragrance from my bodice,
Or look into its purest purity
From a vase of Attic mold,
While I muse, or while I work.
In morning hours,
Fresh from the garden cut,
With dew upon its lips;
Or in the evening,
With the lingering blush of sunset on its
cheeks,
So shall it be—this rose,
In place of thy sweet presence
Loved and lost!
And this shall be our secret!



LOVE'S MEASURE

My love no measure knew
Until by chance, one day,
My thoughts dwelt on a jeweled piece
Hung round the neck of my beloved,
That boded rivalry.
It thrust my heart—a poinard sharp!
And dead in faint it fell.
In vain all efforts made
To start the springs of life,
For still my heart lies prone,
Lost in unconsciousness.



LOVE'S PRESENCE

His presence fills this place
As incense sweet.
This street he walked!
That scene he looked upon!
Here he labored, here aspired,
Here tasted joy and pain.
There, on that quiet hill,
The grave of one he loved,
Green by his hand
And hallowed by his tears;
At the turning of this lane,
Safe lodged his heart
In the resting place of home;
And round that home
Twine memories dewed with joy
And memories wet with tears:
Fond faces looked on him,
Whose love his eyes looked back;
Words, gentle, tender, low,
Were spoken from loved lips.

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

Now, all these gone, save but these shells
Of house, and tree, and hedge, and road,
And he, too, gone far from these scenes!
Ah, gone? How false that word!
How art thou gone?
I see thee everywhere I turn,
In street, in shop; by wood, and stream
I feel thy presence always near,
O heart most dear, most dear!

LOVE'S LONGING

Would I could impart my soul
Bare of all words to you:—
Words that confuse, impede
The passage of the thought between.

But could you then divine
The thought I'd have you share?
You! whom words have given no hint
Of the soul-play underneath?



LOVE'S WAY

If I do not much mistake,
Love chooses a perilous way:
In truth, she holds out all those charms
For which my heart has longed:
But with those long-sought joys
Are mingled much of ominous mien,
The which, would trouble me,
Persuade my discreet mind,
And judgment true,
From taking Love for life;
But Love so confidant, so pressing,
So sweet, so all entrancing, says
"Fear not;
If thou wilt go with me,
I will transform these all
So thou wilt see them not,
But only me."
Then hesitate not, timid heart,
To follow Love's request;
There wait thee all thy hopes
If thou but give a trustful hand:

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

No trial thou canst not withstand,
No sorrow sink beneath,
No labor yet too hard for thee
When thou in Love dost rest;
For she will hold thee, she will fold thee,
In her tender arms of strength,
Invulnerable to things, and to thyself!



LOVE'S CHOICE

Radiant with the glow of the west upon my face,
Fresh with the scent of poesy upon my lips,
Sad with the world-cares on my heart,
The pencil moves my thoughts to light,
From their dark recess in the mind:
My soul confused by light and shadow,
Rended by this sweet and sadness,
Breaks forth in broken song.
Music soft, help me to sing
The song that lieth on my heart,
To gather up its scattered chords
In one full song of cheer,
A fitting tribute to my Love.

SONG

My Love shall be a princess
With eyes of Heaven's blue,
And cheeks the tint of a tender west;
With lips made fresh by rosy spring
That wells from her young heart;
Her hair of silken spider threads,

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

Kissed by the lips of light,
And twined in many a wandering curl.
Her form, that grace and sweetness mixed,
The image of the queen to be;
A voice 'twould vie with Orpheus',
To call the trees and flowers;
And hands and feet the thrice delight,
And thrice despair of artist eyes:
All these shall dress my princess
Fit for her princely Lord.

Then from within a voice of doubt;—
"But will she have a soul more fair
Than one who loves thee well,
Whose face is plain,
Whose form no goddess fair might choose,
But of that soul,—what words?
Has it no eyes of Heaven's blue,
And cheeks of evening sky:
No lips made fresh by rosy spring,
No gold spun hair to nestle in—
Thine eyes, and cheeks, and hungering lips?
No form of queenly grace,
And voice of bird and brook;

No hands and feet the envy of
A wandering spirit dropped to earth?"

Wait, wavering heart, be quiet now:
Love I the soul more, or the body?
Then let me choose.



LOVE'S FEAR

O Love, have I lost your hold?
Is it dark that I cannot see you?
Am I dead that I cannot feel you?
Are you there, Love?
Press my hand for the answer,
Touch my lips for a sign,
So I shall know I have not lost you!

O to lose you would be death!

Then truest, truest Love,
Closer press my hand,
Lay your lips now on my heart,
So its beats shall feel
Your warm kiss.—

Now, I know, Love, you are there!



LOVE'S LATE COMING

Can I hope at the gates of sunset
To gather a flower of dawn—
Love, pride of the garden
And queen of all?

Can I hope to gather Love's fruit,
Apples of Life,
Whose taste will open the eyes of the taster
To knowledge of joy?

My own I claim,—
The fruit that had no blossom;
The luscious vintage of the noon,
And of the western sun.

Fruit of day without a dawn,
Aurora's beauteous child of night,
Twilight-countenanced,
And draped in clouds of gold,
And sunset glory.

O voice within, O voice without,
Raise not in accent 'gainst this claim,—
My soul's true heritage.



LOVE'S DESPERATION

Why at this fearful cost?—
These torturous uncertainties!
These heart aches, heart breaks!
Strivings to the death!
Is there so much of worth in this one?
Are there not others full as fair?
For others there be other,
But there is none for me,
None other in the cycling worlds—
My soul's true mate!

OTHER VERSES

THE NEARING MILESTONE

YOUTH



I SHALL weep that day
Upon the neck of Youth,
Who now has turned to view herself,
And for the first time hides her face.
For lo! the roses withered and the color fled,
She hastens from the circle gay
Of nimble feet, and song and dance,
To seek a spot apart
To weep alone.

She cannot find a place
Among that busy throng,
Who long have cast their flowers away,
And found a sweeter recompense
In gratitude won from a suffering world,
To whom they minister,—
For she has all this while
Been busy with her roses.

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

She cannot join the crowd
That sit, serene and well content,
Around their cheerful hearths,
Pressing their withered flowers,
And sighing, "True they die,
But others here more sweet.
Let's bless the gods of Time
Who steal the sweet but leave the sweeter,"—
For still upon her, cling
The robes of maidenhood.

She cannot join that shining band
That say: "Lo! Youth, how empty, how
deceived,
These laurels better far
Than all the roses Youth has worn,"—
For in her hand she holds no crown.

Alas! where must she go,—
This lorn, unhappy Youth?
Her once spring-garments faded;
She has no home in all the earth.
Ah! she must die! unloved, unsung!
A garland, stranger, for her bier!
A tear, O world, for her lone grave!



LOVE

I shall weep that day,
Upon the neck of Love;—
That I have long pursued
In pain and torture,
Held by fascination of her charms,
As one who chases rainbows.
I shall weep because we part,
For I have called her from afar,
To stay her steps that may be weary,
From fleeing long and hard:
"Return, thou oft pursued,
Thou longed for, yearned for, all in vain;
Fear not! I will not harm thee;
I will no more pursue;
Come, give thy hand
In sad farewell.
But let me weep upon thy neck,
In one long fond embrace:
These tears have e'en a balm
To sooth this heart that breaks,
But, ah, can break no more,
Immune forever from thy charms."

Thus shall I weep upon thy neck,
On that sad day,
O loved, O lost!
O dearest loss of all—
On that sad day,
So long to come, so feared,
But all so quickly gone,
For other days of toil and pain,
And ah, perchance of joy,—
A joy made new,
Of different mien,
Unseen, unknown, unborn,
To that sad day.

LIFE

And I shall weep that day,
Upon the neck of Life,—
So poor, so all in rags,
That started on the years
With gold in hand—
Those talents lent to all,
That still lie in the hand,
But small increased.



O Life, what hast thou done
With all these years,
That thou in rags
Must still be clad,
When costly garments should attire thee,
And wealth lie in thy lap?

O Life, we shall not part:
Would that these tears
Might waken thy dry heart,
To put forth verdure fresh;
That lo! the years to come
Might reap from this late spring
A glorious harvest yet.

O Life, let's look for this!
We two must still keep on,
When these have gone their way.
We cannot part,
One cannot die without the other.

And as I weep upon thy neck,
On that sad day,
My fondest wish, these acrid tears
Give force to fill the unborn years,
Full to the brim,
With winter's fruit.

"SOMETIME" PICTURES

These "sometime" pictures that come and go
When the eyes are closed,
And the mind is still,
Ere the dream-land folds have closed it in.
Such mountains, and skies, and plains,
That break into landscapes fair,
And come and go on the closed lids,
In quick panoramic view!
Such pictures, no artist ever paints;
Such pictures, no poet ever dreams;
Such pictures, no eyes have seen awake!
But enough—you know not what I mean,
If you have never seen
These pictures come and go,
When your eyes were closed,
And your mind lay quiet—though awake,
On the border-land of dream.



DEATH'S TRANSFORMATION

O blessed is that Death,
That brings us closer yet than Life,
As the years slip by!
That cuts all branches from the tree,
But the limbs of Love,
Until the tree at last
Is left of Love entire.

THE TWO TEMPLES

At the parting of this road,
Two temples stand:
Stern duty points to one,
But my heart is with the other.
I go where duty points.
Still my heart is with the other.
O loved hills, and trees, and skies!
O sacred house of prayer!
I thank, thee, Father, for these both,
For both are Thine.

THE IDEALIST

Past twelve! past twelve!
The hands set towards the West,
And day declines.
What work progressing? Tools about,
And the workman in his shop:
What pieces done? No form complete;
But the Master hopes to fashion,
The pieces in his hand,
Perfect in Truth and Beauty,
Like the model shining before him.
This is his dream;
And he lives in his dream,
While time slips away,
Till death one day
Takes hold his hand,
And the dream comes true.



VOICELESS HUMANITY

Alas! the poor mute lips,
That cannot speak their tale of woe:
Fixed like stone, without a voice,
That need must wait,
Dumb servitors of Fate,
For a poet to give them voice!

Some tearful Shelly
Bemoaning upon the shore,
May pour his voice to the answering waves;
But these dumb souls,
With woes as heavy,
And hearts as broken,
Must suffer, standing mute,
Like tearless stone!

THE DEATH

There was a death within our house,
Last night!
O how you'd laugh,
If I should tell;
And hold your hands
In mirthful, mock derision,
At one so puerilely tender,
To call it death,—
The agonizing of a mouse
Caught in a trap.

Yet, none the less, 'twas death,
Which we, too, once must feel,
And pain that makes us thus akin
To creatures such as this,
So scorned, that pain to them, or death,
Is but a theme for cruel sport.

Ah, Love! art so perverted?
Or, are there different loves,
One for our kind,—
A great, broad, royal feeling,—
And one for creatures such as this?

Then Love is not so much to me:
For I dream higher things of Love.
I would believe that Love
Is all-enfolding, all-heart-reaching,
That even to the meanest creature,
It bendeth down
In tenderness and pity,
To feel a pain, to ease a wound,
E'en though that creature
Were an insect,
E'en though that creature
Were a noisome pest.
This much of pity is its right,
If Love be sent of God,
If Love be God.

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

THE VISION

Keep clear thine eye,
Keep true thine heart,
Nor faint, nor cease,
Nor slack thy patience:
Then in a moment,
When thou thinkest not,
The heavens will unfold,
The glory will descend,
The vision will appear;
And overcome with seraph joy,
Thou then shall faint,
Thou then shall fall,
But Gratitude shall wake unconsciousness,
And Love shall lift thee to thy feet.



THE NEW DAY

As I open my eyes,
Day stares at me,
And Night with a beckoning hand:
"I relieved thee these long hours,
And took thee to my land of dream,
To wander free
And rest thy labored limbs.
Take up the burden now again,
And travel this new day,—
So like that yesterday:
But ah! perchance so changed,
Yea, thou thyself art changed,
For I have made thee all anew—
Have woven with my spell,
All past experience and knowledge,
Into a fabric different,
So that, a stranger to thyself,
Thou goest forth
With each new day.
Knowst thou what dost await thee
In this day?
No signs forewarn thee, good or ill,

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

In that bright sun,
That blazes through thy window;
Or in those boisterous shouts
Of roused rejoicing life.
Thou livest to the direst ill,
But all unconscious;
As moves the unwarned train,
Upon the yawning gulf.
Thou stumblest unawares
On richest opportunity,
As on a hidden treasure.
Look not for either,
In this day,
But take thou hold the wheels of toil,
Content, if only, at my call,
Thou hast persisted hard,
And earned thy hours of rest,
Which I have given thee,
And still will give again.
'Tis heaven's portion to the just and unjust,
But sweeter to the just.
List! now the wheels of toil are creaking,
The air resounds with labor.

Stay thou not longer here
With Night's receding spirit,
But to thy work!"

LITTLE BROWN TOADSTOOLS

Sweet little brown toadstools,
Huddled all in a heap;
Nine bonny caps,
Just pushed from the rain-softened mould.
This picture I caught,
In one rapid glance,
And held, as I hurried along,
While the soul of their soul
Went into my soul,
And breathed forth a gladness there;
And I felt more akin,
In a new subtle way,
To the great loving heart of Nature,
And I fain had caressed
Those nine bonny heads,
That nestled so jauntily there,
On the lap of their warm earth-mother.

ACHIEVE

Achieve! achieve! O soul, thine own,
God on His throne is keeping it
Close in his hand for thee.
Reach forth and take,
Nor Fate, nor Death, nor worlds,
Can wrest it from thee;
For He holds it.—
Thine own eternal portion,
Bequeathed that day He did beget thee,
And waiting, waiting,
E'en though for eons,
For thy claim.

Why then a world between,
Why then the flight of ages?
This day thy right possess,
This day achieve,
O soul, thine own!



THE RAIN

Methought—my mind absorbed in dreams—
It was a drum I heard.
'Twas but the rain,
Tattooing on the window-pane.

The gushing rain, pell-mell it fell
Upon the roof's decline,
With here a drop, and there a drip,
Down from the house's eaves.

The poor grass laughed,
And reached its head;
The flowers spread wide their cups.
Ah! laughter was heard in the farmer's heart,
Its ripples touched his face,
And the whole great world of Nature round,
Echoed back the sound,
Of the drip, drop, on the house's eaves,
The drum on the window pane.

THE CAPTIVE BIRD

A prisoner he,
In that tiny cage;
His song the color
Of his lonely heart—
Sad chirps, low trills,
His birdling sighs.

Yet sometimes he forgets his grief,
And warbles forth a note of cheer,—
A love song round and full,
To a mate he feigns to see;
Each atom of his little being,
Vibrates with his birdling's soul,
Quivering like a wind-touched palm;
While the music bubbles forth.
But soon, the rapturous flood of love
Falls back to lonely chirps,
And the tiny frame
Shrinks tinier in loneliness.



OUTWARD BOUND

Give me a ship—a big ship!
I go upon the seas;
Be thou my captain,
Maker of the worlds.
The seas I do not know,
Nor of that bourn I would arrive,
Destined of thee,
E'er the worlds were formed.

Farewell, this land-bound harbor!
Farewell, these placid waters!
The ocean calls, the ocean calls.
Haste, loose the anchor,
And away, away,
To the unknown waves,
To the unknown winds,
And the unknown shores beyond.

THE CENTURY PLANT

The time of fruiting has arrived!
I must put forth
In one year what I strove in ten:
In one quick growth,
The measure of a life:—
The long, the dull, the tedious many,
The strong, the rapid, glorious few.
Without the first what then the last?
Without the last, why then the first?
Come air, and sky, and earth, and all,
And yield a willing aid,
For this last growth—this bloom,—
My life—my death!



LOST VISION

Who are these along the way,
So quiet and so comfortable,
Whom ambition stirs no more:
Who watch the years' procession pass,
As they who dally at the river's brink,
Gazing at the purling waters move
Onward towards the great sea's bourn?

Gone the glowing flowers of youth!
Lost the blush from off the grape!
Stolen the sweet from out the honey!
Subdued they walk beneath the stars,
No hands outstretched.

Lo! these are they—with vision lost,—
Whom Nature's anaesthesia has o'erpowered:
They breathe it in with deeper breath
At each new milestone's turn,
Nor fight the death-fraught power,
Content to sleep the years away,
Content to lose their crown!

Shall I, too, be overcome,
And let my birthright
Gently loosen from my hand?
Ye gods forbid!
Infuse into my veins immortal youth,
And rouse the dead'ning sense,
By soul-awakening pangs of hunger:
This continue till full-ripened life
Drops from the stem.

BEAUTY

A boon, I ask,
O loved All-Father!
Beauty in all things to see,
(So must the eyes of poets be);
Beauty in all things to feel,
(So must the hearts of poets be);
No thing too small,
Too common or despised,
To yield its world to beauty,
And fill the heart, day piled on day,
More full of thee,—God,—
One with Beauty.



THE POET'S CHILD

I needs must let you go,
Strange, unfathomed child,
Form and likeness of my soul,
Prayed for, brooded on, and wept o'er!
Child of anguish and of toil,
Child of love and hope,
Aye, scorned at times and hated!
I lose you from my heart at last,
To wander in a stranger world!
I cannot analyze nor understand you,
Child of mine,
More, mayhap, than they who meet you!
If perchance your image
May be like unto their own,
Some comfort may be theirs,
In sympathy and companionship.
If not, you still must stand,
My own true child,
Unfathomed but by God!

Who knows with what heart tremblings
I now release your hand;
I, who all these years,

Have held you here,
Secreted near my heart,
Part of me—mine own self,—
Life of my life,
Breath of my breath.

I cannot longer hold you,
Else you may perish in my grasp
For other lives to live in,
To grow, increase, be part of them.
I now unclasp you from my heart,
My own soul's likeness,
Living by this breath from me!
Go forth and live your life,
For I to fuller life must haste,
To breathe forth others such as thou.

THE MOCKING BIRD AND THE CRICKET

A night like this the mocking bird,
Full drunk with love's red wine,
Had flooded all the moonlit vale
With the boisterous voice of spring.

Now silent is that voice,
Gone with the spring, the joy;
But from his grassy tent,
The cricket cometh forth.

How soothing is his level chirp,
That lies along the earth,
Nor ever seeks to soar
Above his leafy bower.

He thrills me not, nor lifts me
Heavenward, to wing among the stars,
And revel in those wild delights,
A feast for gods.

But chirping cheerily through the night,
Over and over, his one song,

IN LOVE'S GARDEN

Keyed to one droning note,
As a viol of a single string.

Drowsiness soft benumbs the sense,
The moonlit earth fades out of view,
And heavy slumber closes down
Upon the world of sight and sound.

O happy, cheery, humdrum cricket,
Thou fellow of the earth,
For tired out limbs and minds contented,
Thou makest music in thyself.

But thou, O bird of heaven and cloud,
That casts in wantonness about
Thy frenzied gladness!
For poets wast thou fashioned,
That their tired souls,
Held long in tensest strain
By life's tight cords,
Might thus relax,
In exercise of joy.

DREAM

'Twas only a dream,
Such a beautiful dream,
Sacred to him and me;
He of a world unknown,
Yet I loved him in this dream.

But even in dream,
A shadow fell
O'er him and me,
On the very hour of joy,
To filch it of its sweet.
But I said, Let fall,
'Tis ever so. Let's love
And gather joy,
Though it only last a day.
Let's drink,
Though it only be a sup,
And live all life in this moment,
Full knowing that crafty Death
Will claim as his share the rest.
But, crafty Death,
Thou art somewhat riven

Of thy black glory,
For thy ebon wings
Are edged with light,
The light of this one moment's bliss."

We drank,
And lived all life in that moment!
And gathered all bliss at a sup!
In this dream,
This beautiful dream.

So, even in dream,
Love may still live on
Its sweet, though partial life,
Hot chased by pain,
To glean what joy must lose
(The greater share).
Soul looks on soul,
That deathless look,
Then parts, nor looks again.

But O sweet dream,
I keep you back,
And am loth to let you fade

Into the hosts of other dreams,
Forgotten long ago!
For you hold me by your spell,
In that one moment's bliss,
That reaches from dream unto waking,
That reaches from night unto light,
And shines as a star of the day.

THE COMING EVENT

Then, it was a month between,
And then a week,
And now a day:
And soon an hour 'twill be.
And O, the very moment follows on!
What if this thing were Death,
And Heaven so near,
Would I be fearful of the moment's brink?

THINE ARMOR

To work! O youth,
In thine own armor clad,
And strike thou to the death!
Assay not to adopt
A ready armor to thy hand,
For ease, or gain, or time,
Or seeming best convenience.
'Twill play thee false!
Then choose—and wisely,—
Thy God-appointed armor.
This only can develop thee,—
Thy brain's true brawn,—
Thy soul's true steel,—
This only gives thy hand its surest cut,
This only makes thee feel within
The rising God,
Strong-sheathed to conquer all.
No David in Saul's armor,
May fell the coming foe!
For Fear, thy archest enemy,
Lies hid in every fold
Of borrowed armor,

To strike thee from within,
Before thou strikst without.
Then up, O budding hero, to thy work,
And in thy God-appointed armor!

A PASSING BREEZE

Soft a breeze comes down this way,
How the poppies hold their hats,
How the eucalypti bow,
How each pepper-leaf salutes,
Each its partner now.
How ashamed the grasses totter,
In uncertain poise;
What a shiver in the palms,
What a turning up of capes
In the clover lawn.
O you naughty breeze,
Such a havoc and a stir
You have made in leaf and blade,
By your sudden sally
Down our quiet way.

GRATITUDE

I thank thee, Father,
For that little sweet;
'Twas like a fresh spring draught
To parched lips.
'Twas like a soft cool touch
To a burning brow.
'Twas like a moment's pause
In hours of pain.
That little sweet, to think on,
That little sweet, to dream on,
More, more, to this starved heart
Than ten-times-ten that, to the full!
O sweet, sweet, tender thing of joy,
Thou savest me from Death!



THE REALMS OF SPIRIT

Youth, youth and roses stay,
Stay in the soul and keep me young!
Young to think with the youngest mind,
Young to feel with youngest heart,
Young to walk with the youngest feet,
That lead the way,
To regions unexplored,
To worlds ahead;
Worlds more vast,
Than lay before Columbus' gaze;
Worlds whose shores
Stretch onward to infinity.

When all the soil of earth
Has felt the tread of man,
The highest point been scaled by him,
The deepest depth by him descended,
The farthest spot his common ground,
Still shall he look for worlds,
Worlds more vast, to conquer!
Then to his inner eye,
Shall loom those regions vast,

Unconquered, unexplored,
And he shall rise unto the task,
Shall rise and conquer.

THE INWARD URGE

The skies are brass!
The gods have turned to stone!
This clay has played me false!
The will, shame-faced,
A coward, slinks away.
Rigidity sets in,
As one gripped in the vise of death;
And yet, I may not pause,
But on, and on, and on!
A force within crowds up this cumb'rous mass
To reach its God-appointed complement.
I move, I still reach out,
As a weakling blade of grass,
Strong from a force within,
Pushes forth for light!

MAN'S GOD-LIKE GIFT

One thought the high born race of gods,—
Who walk in pain this mortal world—
Have left for solace.
O glorious scorn! They can refuse!
Fate may snatch from out their grasp,
All things they would;
But O, delusive Fate,
Have they not looked on heaven
E'er ever the worlds were born?
The cheap earth substitutes
Thrust in their eyes,
They can refuse; and still have strength
To walk in god-like solitude their way.



ONE VENTURE

I've ventured all in one argosy!
If the winds blow foul,
Then all is lost, save this:
To be called a fool by the hard-eyed world,
That counts not the courage of the venture,
Nor yields aught to him
Whose Argosy fails its harbor.
But be it a fool then,—or a god;
(It cannot fail of one).
The true heart can but venture
His all in a noble cause,
Else his conscience brands him fool within;
Or, losing—the world brands him fool without.
The winds of Fortune
Who can determine?
The venture alone is sure!
The highest reward is that!
E'er ever the vessel moves;
For God counts the venture,
While man counts the gain of the venture.

Yet sweet to him who has ventured
Is the ladened vessel's return—
The visible winnings of labor—
Though it count not with God;
Though he care not the count of man—
Yet sweet to himself,
The success of his dear-bought venture,
That cost him a world,
Though that world be a bauble!

The writing of this book was done by Ida Frances Anderson. The designs of the headings were by Alma Cock, the typographical arrangement by Charles H. Smith, and the presswork by Arthur L. Jason. The book as a whole was designed and made by George Wharton James at the Arroyo Guild Press, 201 Avenue Sixty-six (Garvanza), Los Angeles, California, in the year of grace, 1909.



DEC 18 1909

One copy del. to Cat. Div.

DEC 28 1909

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